



17 MAR 98

STARMAN



BEYOND SINS

ROBINSON

HARRIS

VON GRAWBARGER



HARRIS
95



PROLOGUE. THE
MIST'S NIGHT CON-
TINUES FOR SOME.

WHAT ARE
WE DOING,
RALPH? WHAT
IN GOD'S NAME
ARE WE
DOING?

WE SHOULD
BE OUT OF HERE.
NOT STILL STUCK
IN THE ALLEYS
WASTING TIME.

MIST SAID
THAT AFTER
OUR HEIST WE
GET OUT OF
TOWN AND RE-
CONVENE IN A
WEEK FOR THE
MONEY.

THIS IS
GOING TO MESS
US UP.

I WANTED SOME
CIGARETTES. SHE
ME.

YOU HAD TO KILL
THE OWNER? FOR A
CIGARETTE?

THE ALLEYS ARE... THEY'RE...
I DON'T LIKE THEM, RALPH.
I DON'T FEEL IN CONTROL
OF THE SITUATION HERE.

WELL, THAT'S
WHERE YOU AND
ME DIFFER,
BABY.

I GOT MY
SMOKES. GOT CASH
FROM THE REGISTER.
GOT THE OLD MAN'S
GRANDDAUGHTER
HERE... FOR...

...WHATEVER
COMES TO MIND
LATER ON.

THAT'S
KIDNAPPING,
RALPH. ARE
YOU--

YES, "I'M!"

SHE'S CUTE,
SHE COMES. NOW
GET IN THE CAR.

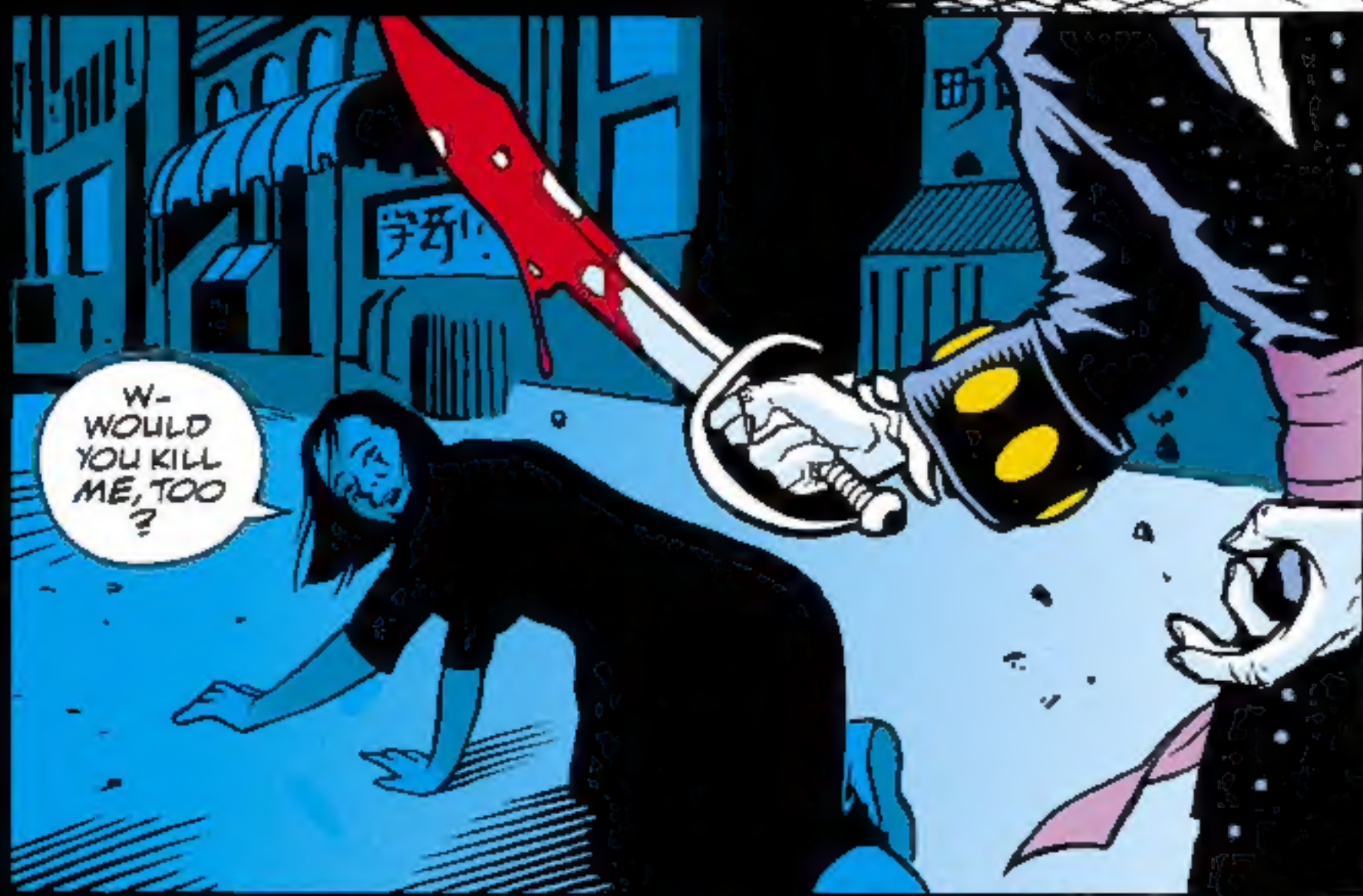
YOU DRIVE. ME
AND THE GOOD GRAND-
DAUGHTER HERE GONNA
GET INTO THE BACK.

YOU A GOOD
GIRL? GONNA
MAKE YOU A
BAAAD GIRL.
GONNA--



BANG BANG





W-
WOULD
YOU KILL
ME, TOO
?



NAY, LASS.
YOU'RE THE
INNOCENT
IN THIS, ARE
YE NOT?

MY GRANDFATHER
LIES DEAD BY THEIR
HANDS, IF THAT'S WHAT
YOU MEAN.



THEN HE'S AVENGED. IT'S
NOT AS SWEET AS IT SOUNDS,
I KNOW. IT WON'T BRING HIM
BACK.

BUT IT'S
BETTER THAN
NAUGHT.



WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

I'VE MANY.
GHOST BEING
THE MOST APT
NOWADAYS.

BUT ONCE I WAS
JON VALOR, A BRITISH
NOBLEMAN, AND ONCE
I WAS A PRIVATEER ON
THE HIGH SEAS.



MY NAME
WAS THE BLACK
PIRATE.



WELL,
WHATEVER
YOUR NAME
IS...

...I
THANK
YOU.

AND NOW THAT
NIGHT IS OVER.
FINALLY.

WE WON'T BE
GOING BACK TO IT.

DAYS HAVE
PASSED. LIGHTLY.
LIKE LITTLE GIRLS
PRETENDING TO
BE BALLERINAS.

FOR JACK, THIS
LAST NIGHT... A
DIFFERENT NIGHT
... WAS A LONG
ONE.

BUT THE MORNING
WILL BE SHORT.

JACK.

WE
GOTTA
TALK.

ENCOUNTERS

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C... WHAT... CAN'T IT WAIT... UNTIL I'M AWAKE?

NO. I'M GOING.



YOU KNOW WHAT THAT WAS LAST NIGHT?

GREAT IS WHAT IT WAS.

GOOD-BYE IS WHAT IT WAS.



YOU AND ME. WE'VE BEEN ON AND OFF FOR TWO YEARS. MONTHS TOGETHER, MONTHS APART. ALWAYS WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT, THOUGH. HUH?



LIKE YESTERDAY, YOU CALL ME UP. "HEY, LUCY, LET'S GET BACK TOGETHER. I MISS YOU. I LOVE YOU."

I THINK MAYBE YOU WERE FEELING LONELY AND VULNERABLE. YOU WANT SOME LOVING. ME, LIKE A FOOL, LET YOU HAVE IT.

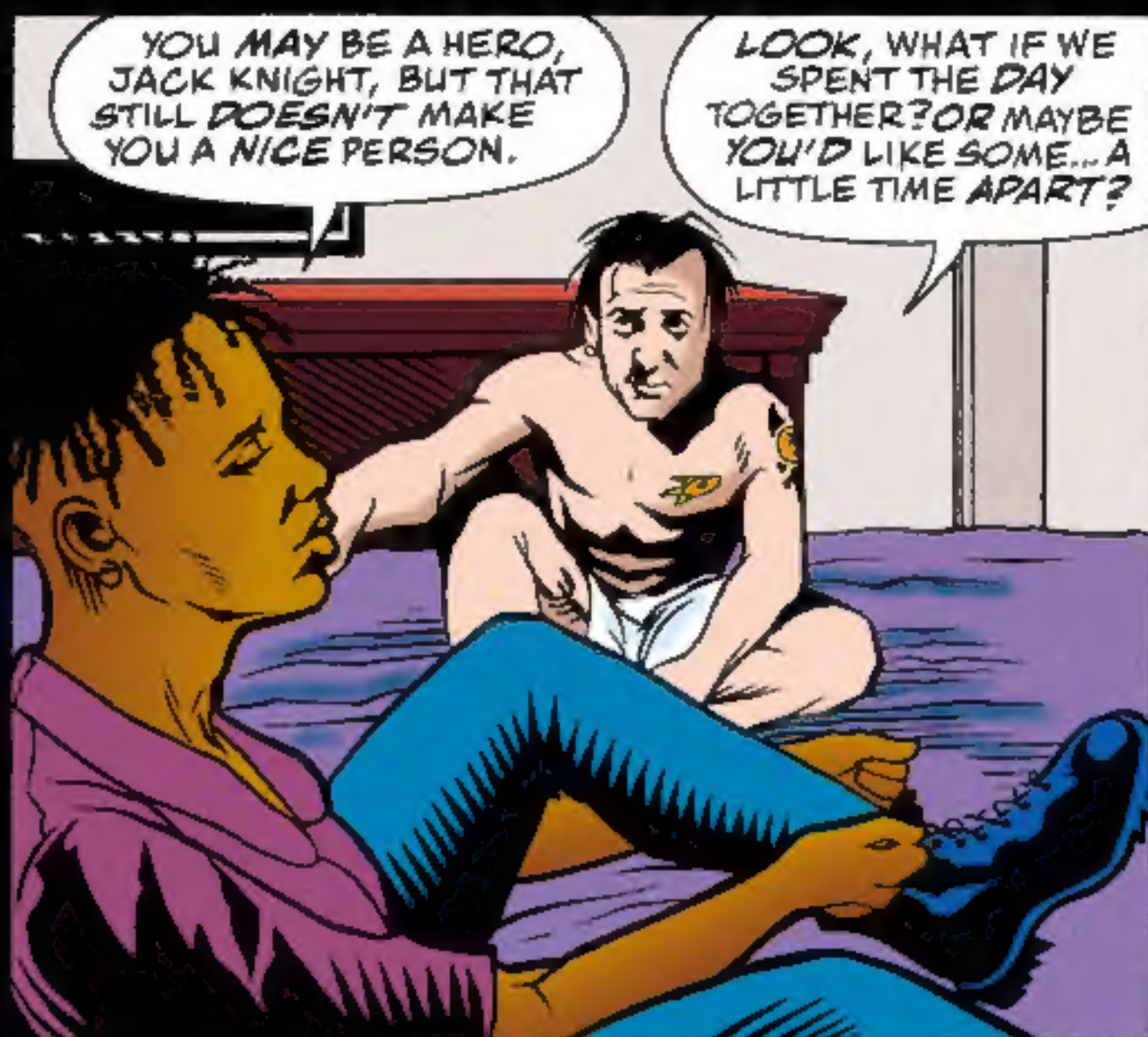


BUT I KNOW IT'S NOT GOING TO LAST. NO MORE THAN THE LAST TIME, WHEN YOU DUMPED ME FOR THAT STRIPPER.



LUCY, THAT... DON'T DREDGE THAT OLD MISTAKE UP. I'VE CHANGED... I'M A SUPER-HERO NOW... WITH RESPONSIBILITIES. I'VE GROWN--!

YOU'LL NEVER GROW, JACK. YOU'RE LUCKY THAT YOU LOOK YOUNGER THAN YOUR AGE, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE TO START ACTING IT.



YOU MAY BE A HERO, JACK KNIGHT, BUT THAT STILL DOESN'T MAKE YOU A NICE PERSON.

LOOK, WHAT IF WE SPENT THE DAY TOGETHER? OR MAYBE YOU'D LIKE SOME... A LITTLE TIME APART?



I DIDN'T
TELL YOU, BUT JUST
BEFORE YOU CALLED
ABOUT GETTING BACK
TOGETHER, I WENT
FOR A JOB INTER-
VIEW.



AN ART FIRM.

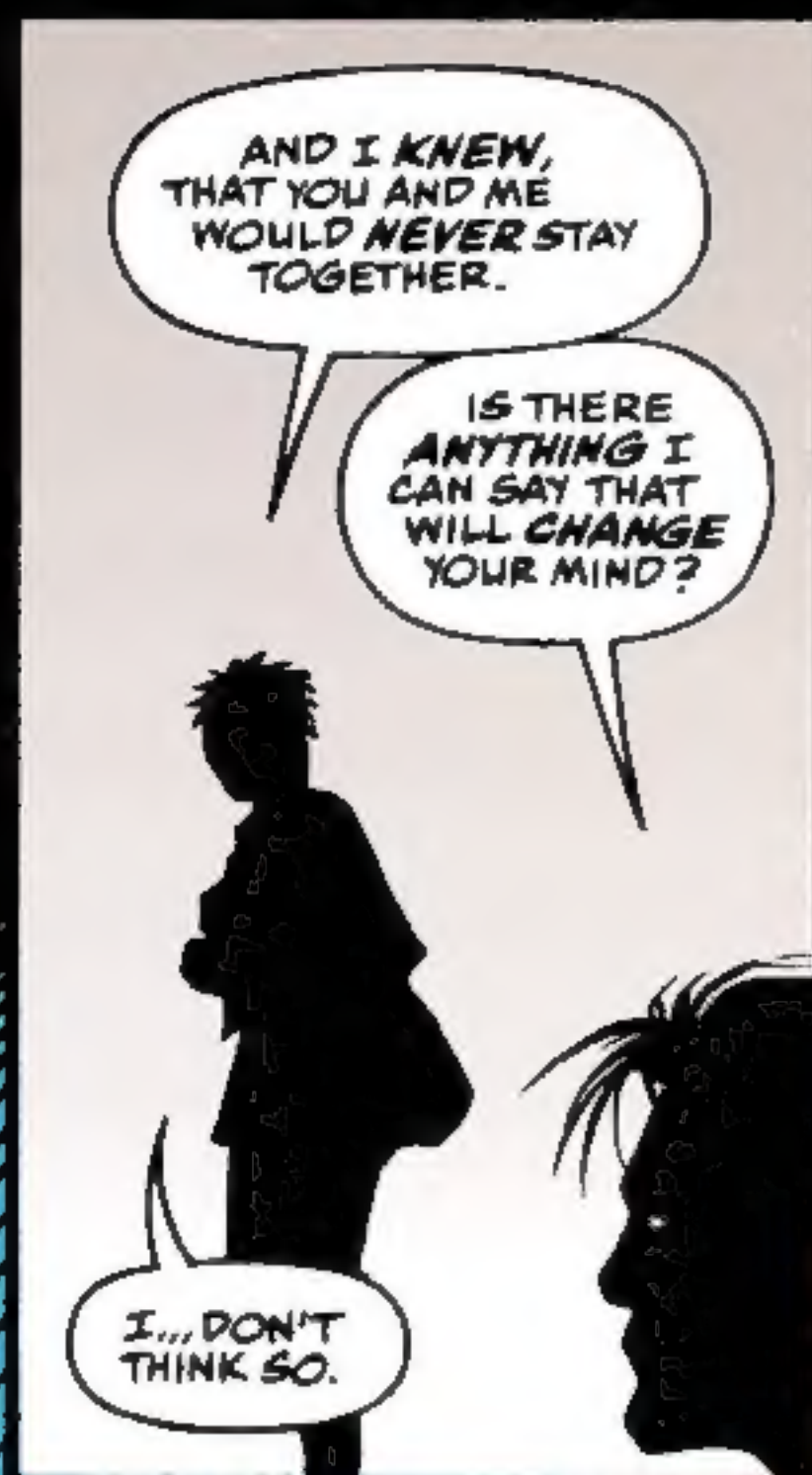
THAT'S GREAT.

IN
MIDWAY
CITY.

THAT'S FAR.



I HAVE TO THINK OF
MY LONG TERM, JACK. LAST
NIGHT WAS GREAT, SURE,
BUT WHEN I WOKE UP, LAST
NIGHT WAS ALL IT WAS.



AND I KNEW,
THAT YOU AND ME
WOULD NEVER STAY
TOGETHER.

IS THERE
ANYTHING I
CAN SAY THAT
WILL CHANGE
YOUR MIND?

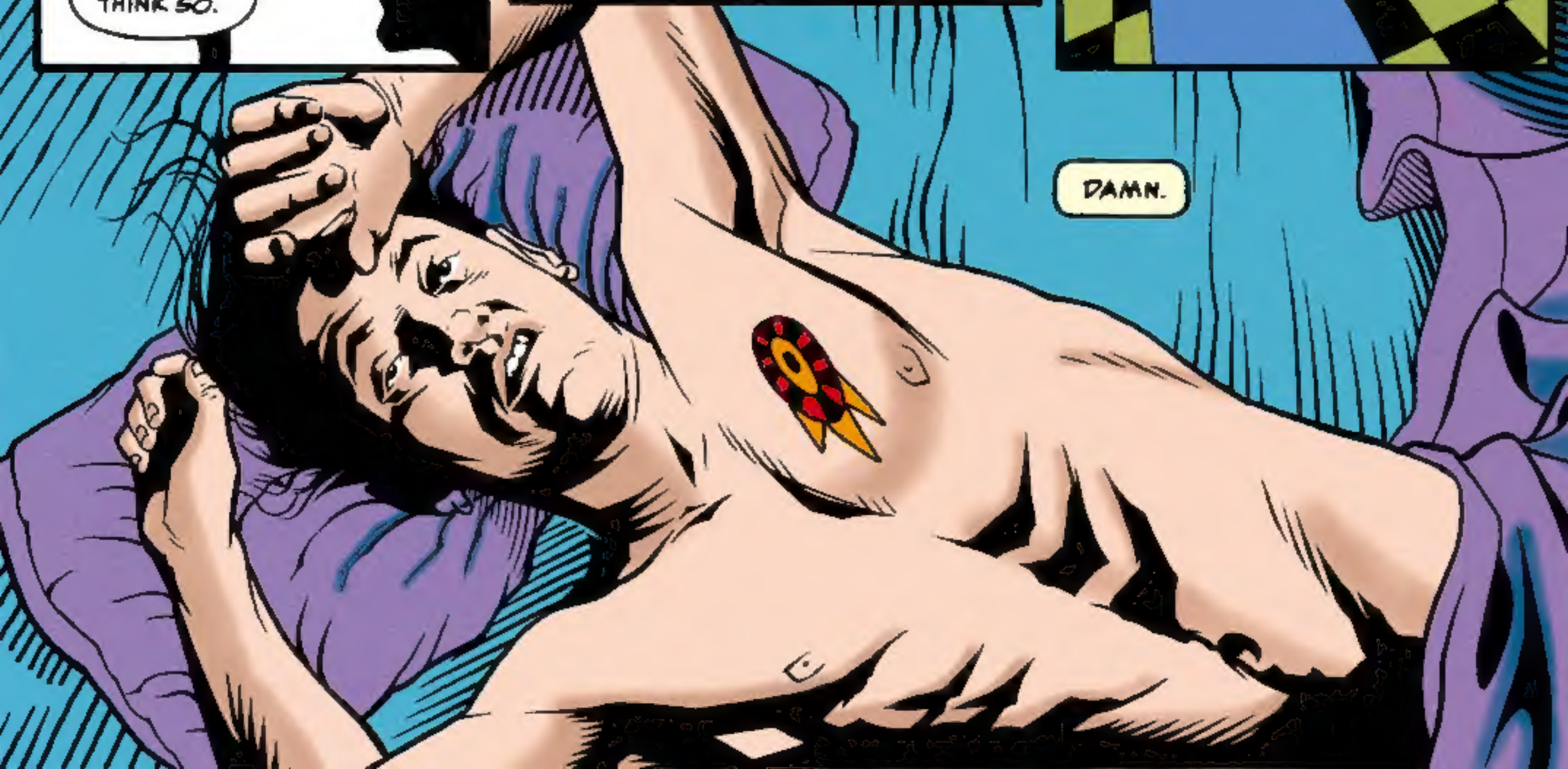
I...DON'T
THINK SO.



THEN
GOOD
LUCK.



DAMN.



"WHAT SHOULD I DO?"

"WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT THIS ONE?"

TED PONDERES THIS IN A HOSPITAL ROOM WARM AND RICH WITH THE SMELL OF FLORA.

EXCEPT THERE ARE NO PLANTS.

ONLY GRUNDY.

SOLOMON GRUNDY. SO GENTLE NOW. LIKE A CHILD.

I COULD NOT BELIEVE IT WHEN JACK BROUGHT YOU HOME. I COULD NOT BELIEVE HE'D DONE SOMETHING SO STUPID.

YOU, A MEMBER OF THE INJUSTICE SOCIETY.

YOU, THE KILLER OF SYLVESTER PEMBERTON.

"SYLVESTER WAS THE STAR SPANGLED KID. HE GREW UP TO BECOME SKYMAN. YOU MURDERED HIM.

"HE ALMOST CHANGED HIS NAME TO STARMAN. DID YOU KNOW THAT? YOU KILLED A MAN WHO ALMOST BORE THE NAME.

"AND HE WAS USING MY TECHNOLOGY, NAME OR NOT.



"YOU'RE EVEN DIFFERENT FROM THE SAVAGE THING THAT FOUGHT BATMAN LAST YEAR."

"BUT I LOOK AT HOW YOU ARE SO DIFFERENT FROM THE CREATURE THAT FOUGHT ME AND ALAN AND ALL OF US, THOSE MANY YEARS GONE."



YOU DEVOLVED BACK INTO THE SWAMP, THEN...

...IS THAT IT?

HMMM...

YOU APPEAR TO RETAIN A VESTIGIAL MEMORY OF PRIOR EVENTS, BUT YOUR PERSONALITY IS SO DIFFERENT. IT'S LIKE YOU'RE A NEW PERSON EACH TIME THE SWAMP RE-FORMS YOU.

IF SO, THEN YOU'RE A NEW GRUNDY. BORN ON MONDAY?

IF SO, THEN HOW CAN I JUDGE YOU FOR SYLVESTER'S KILLING?

I AM SO TORN, SOLOMON. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO HATE YOU, OR TO LOVE YOU LIKE THE SMALL CHILD THAT YOU NOW APPEAR TO BE.

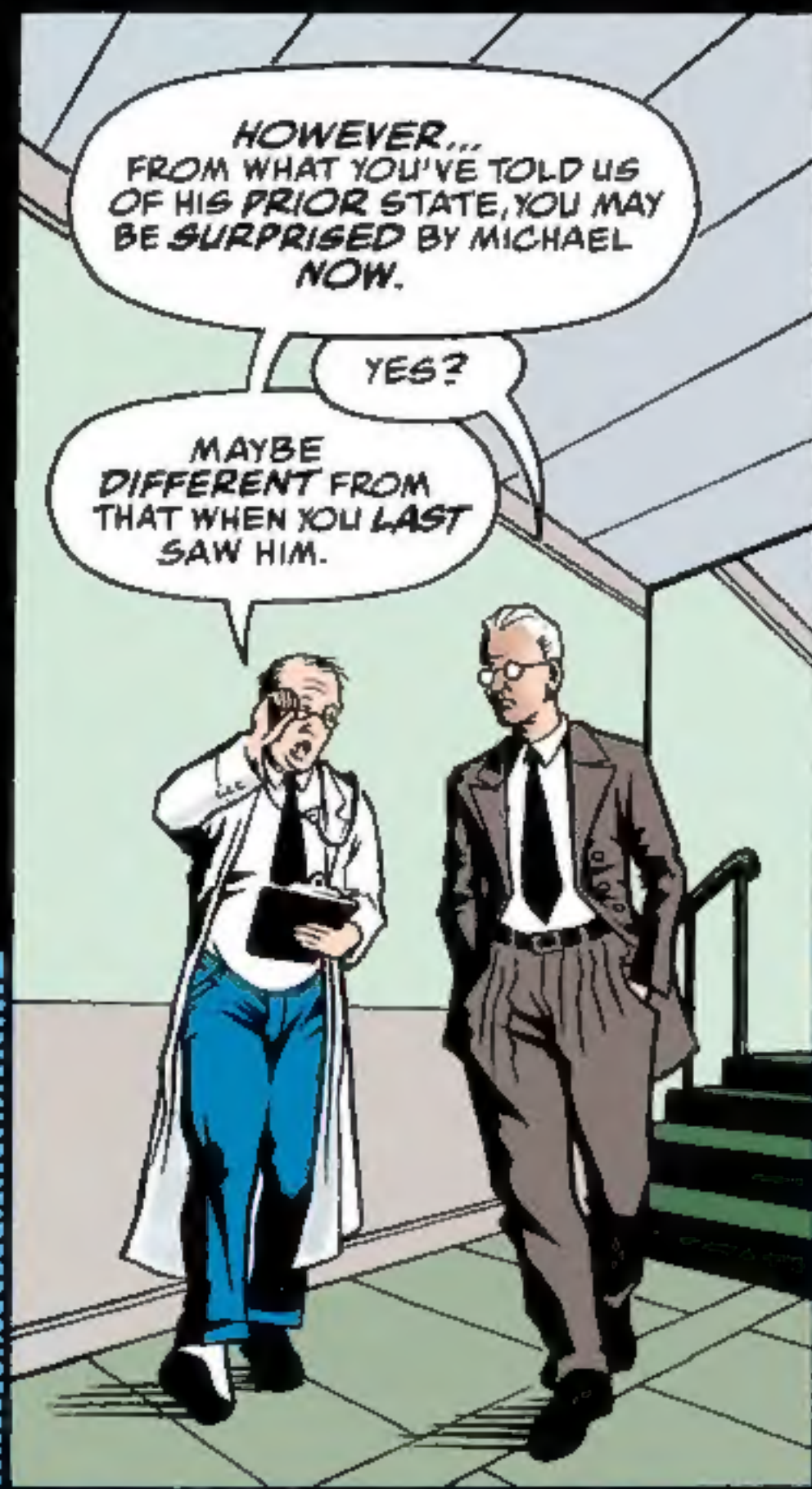


I AM SO TORN.



YES, I'D SAY THAT MICHAEL THOMAS'S CONDITION HAS IMPROVED.

YES, MR. KNIGHT, I'D DEFINITELY SAY THAT.



HOWEVER... FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD US OF HIS PRIOR STATE, YOU MAY BE SURPRISED BY MICHAEL NOW.

YES?

MAYBE DIFFERENT FROM THAT WHEN YOU LAST SAW HIM.



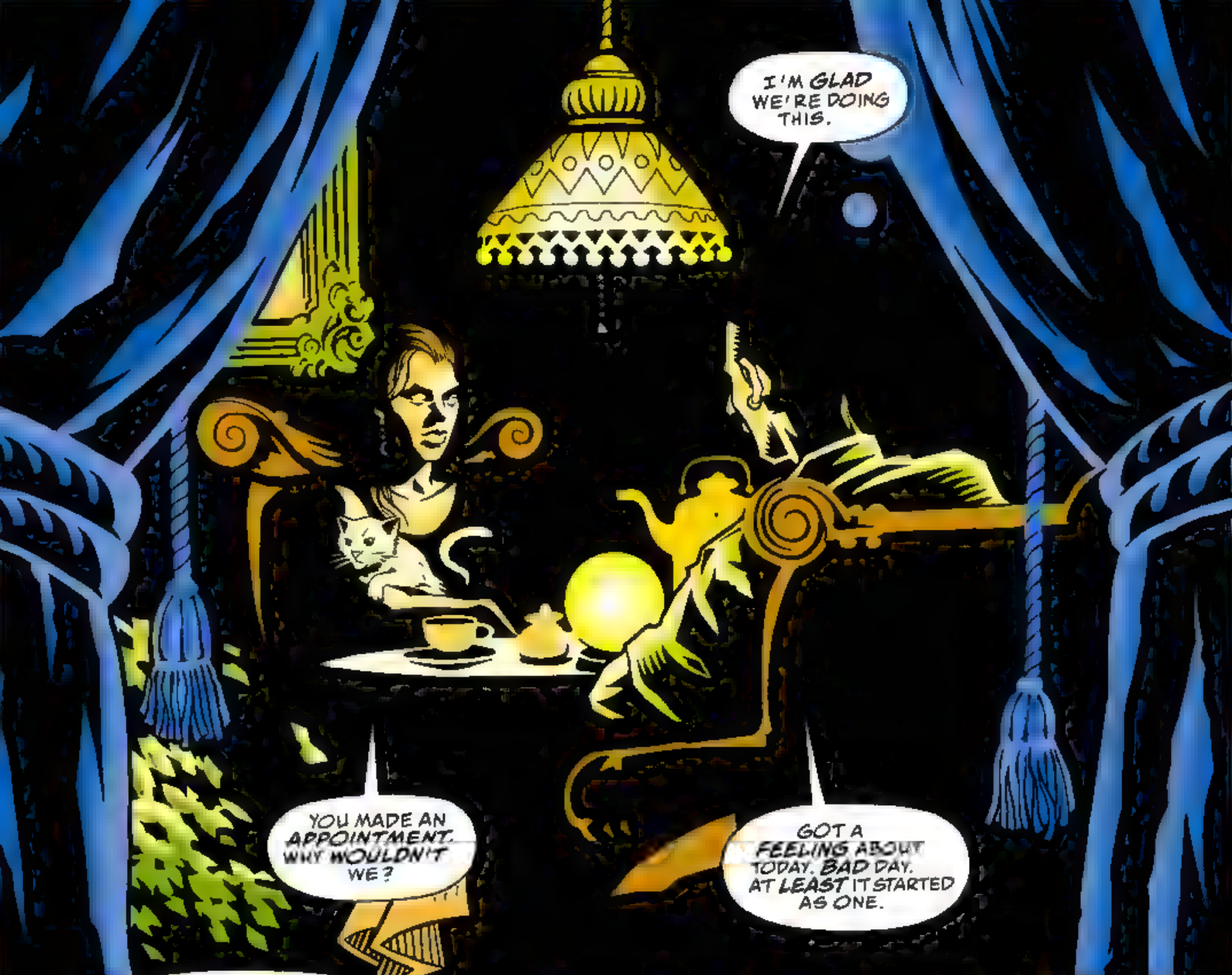
HOW SO?

WEEELL...



COME IN, MR. KNIGHT. COME IN, PLEASE-- TAKE A SEAT.

I CAN NOT WAIT TO TALK WITH YOU.



I'M GLAD WE'RE DOING THIS.

YOU MADE AN APPOINTMENT. WHY WOULDN'T WE?

GOT A FEELING ABOUT TODAY. BAD DAY. AT LEAST IT STARTED AS ONE.

WELL, NOTHING BAD IS GOING TO HAPPEN NOW. SIT BACK AND DRINK YOUR TEA. LET ME CONCENTRATE AND--

HEY, I KNOW THE GUY IN THAT PAINTING...

...THAT'S ZATARA.




AN OLD, DEAD FRIEND.

NOW, shhhh.



YOU'RE CLOSE TO SPACE NOW. OUTER SPACE.




BUT WHY WOULD I EVER WANT TO GO THERE?

BECAUSE YOUR FATHER DID. BECAUSE SOMEONE WILL ASK YOU TO, WHO YOU'LL FEEL UNABLE TO REFUSE.

WHAT ABOUT THE "WINGED MAN"? WHEN'S HE COMING?

NOT YET. IN FACT, HIS PATH HAS CHANGED COURSE. AS A RESULT, YOU MAY NEVER MEET HIM AFTER ALL.




THEY OF THE LIGHTNING AND THUNDER WILL FIRST COME YOUR WAY.


AND AN OLD MAN WITH A HEART LIKE A COOL, GREEN FIELD.

WILL STARMAN... ME BEING STARMAN, KILL ME?

THERE ARE TWO CROSSROADS YOU WILL COME TO.



TAKING THE WRONG TURN EITHER TIME WILL RESULT IN DEATH.

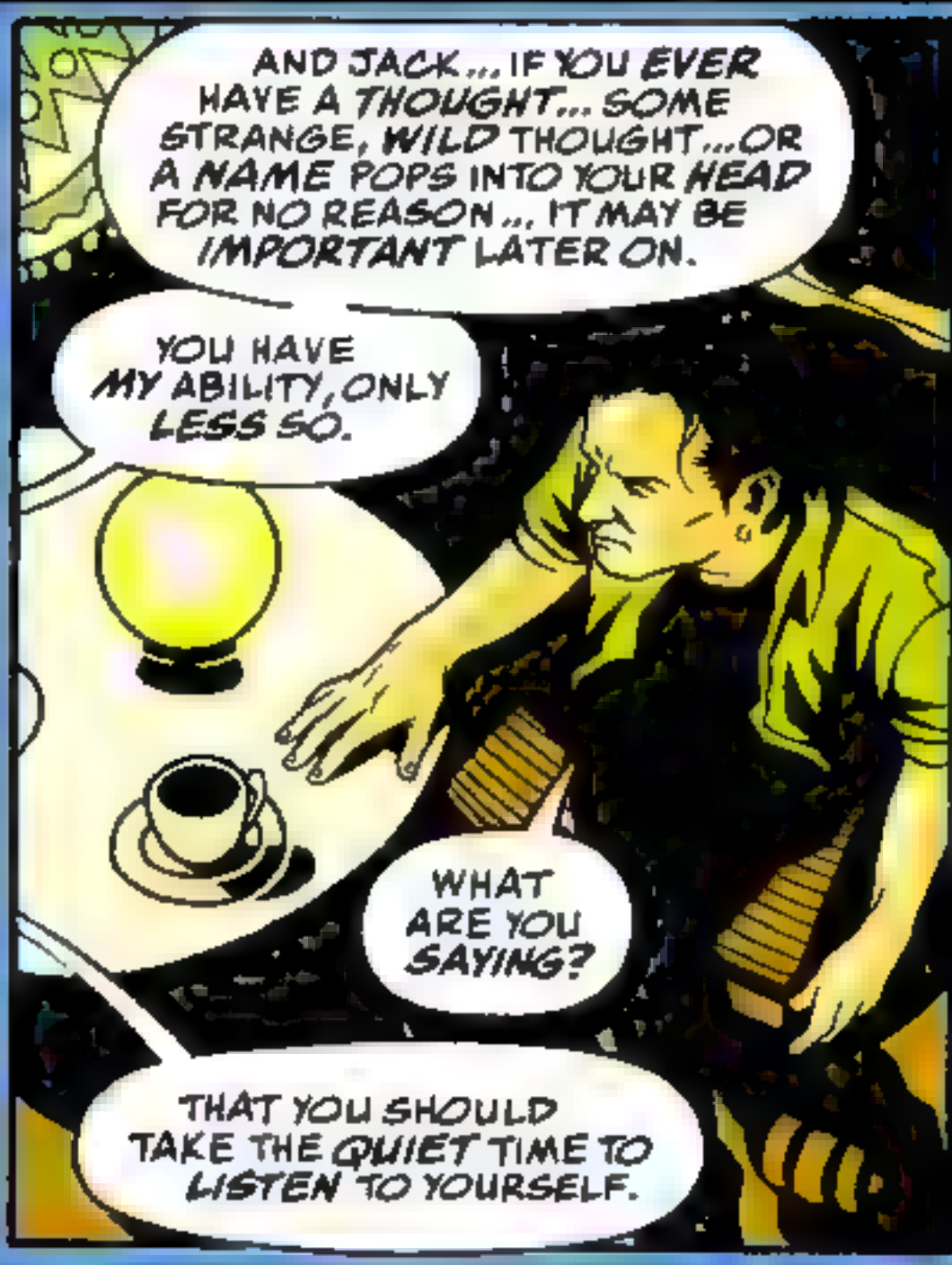


MAYBE THEN I'LL KNOW SOME PEACE.

NO. THAT WILL COME WHEN YOU HOLD YOUR SON'S HAND.

MY SON?

ONE DAY.

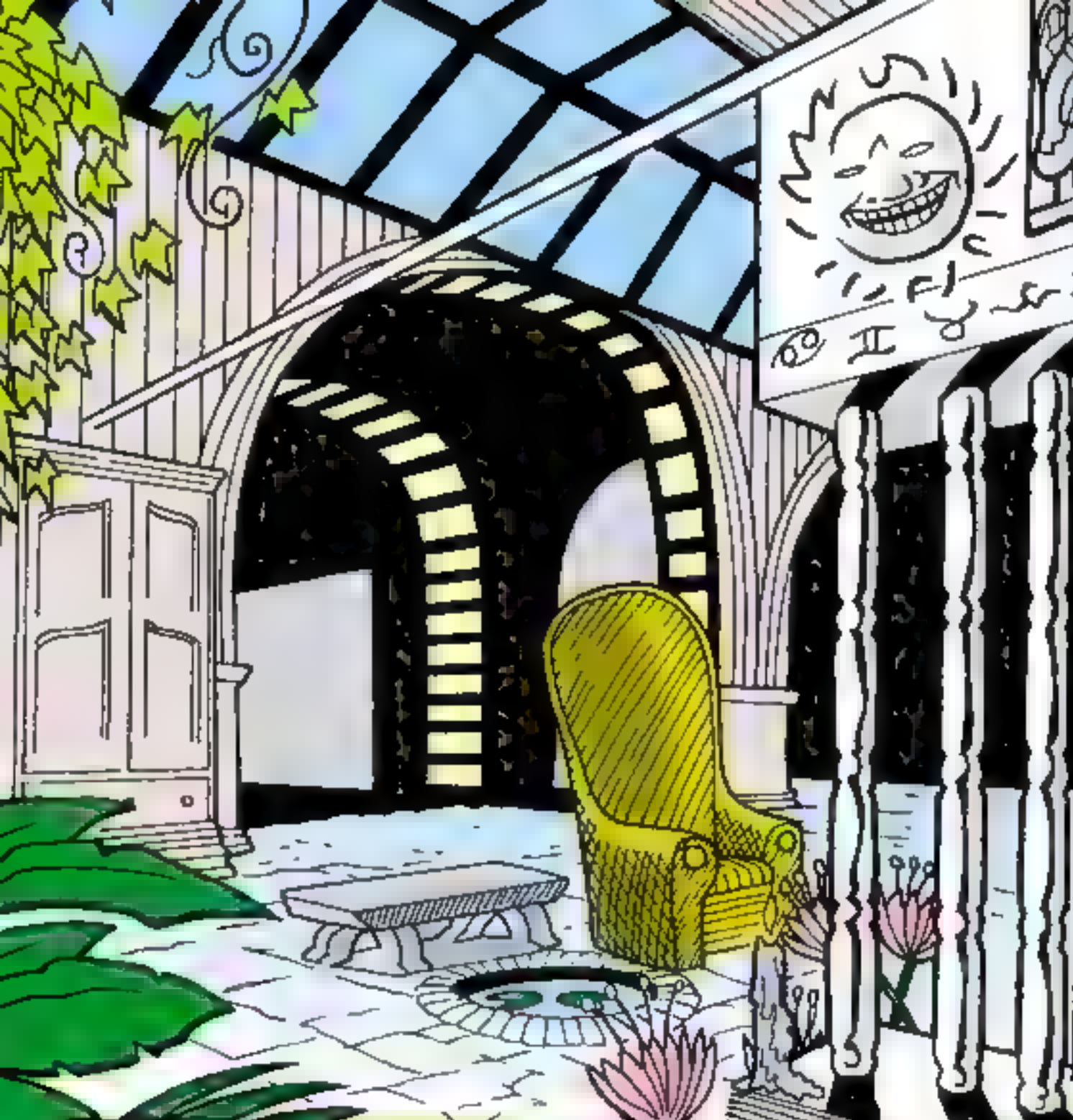


AND JACK... IF YOU EVER HAVE A THOUGHT... SOME STRANGE, WILD THOUGHT... OR A NAME POPS INTO YOUR HEAD FOR NO REASON... IT MAY BE IMPORTANT LATER ON.

YOU HAVE MY ABILITY, ONLY LESS SO.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

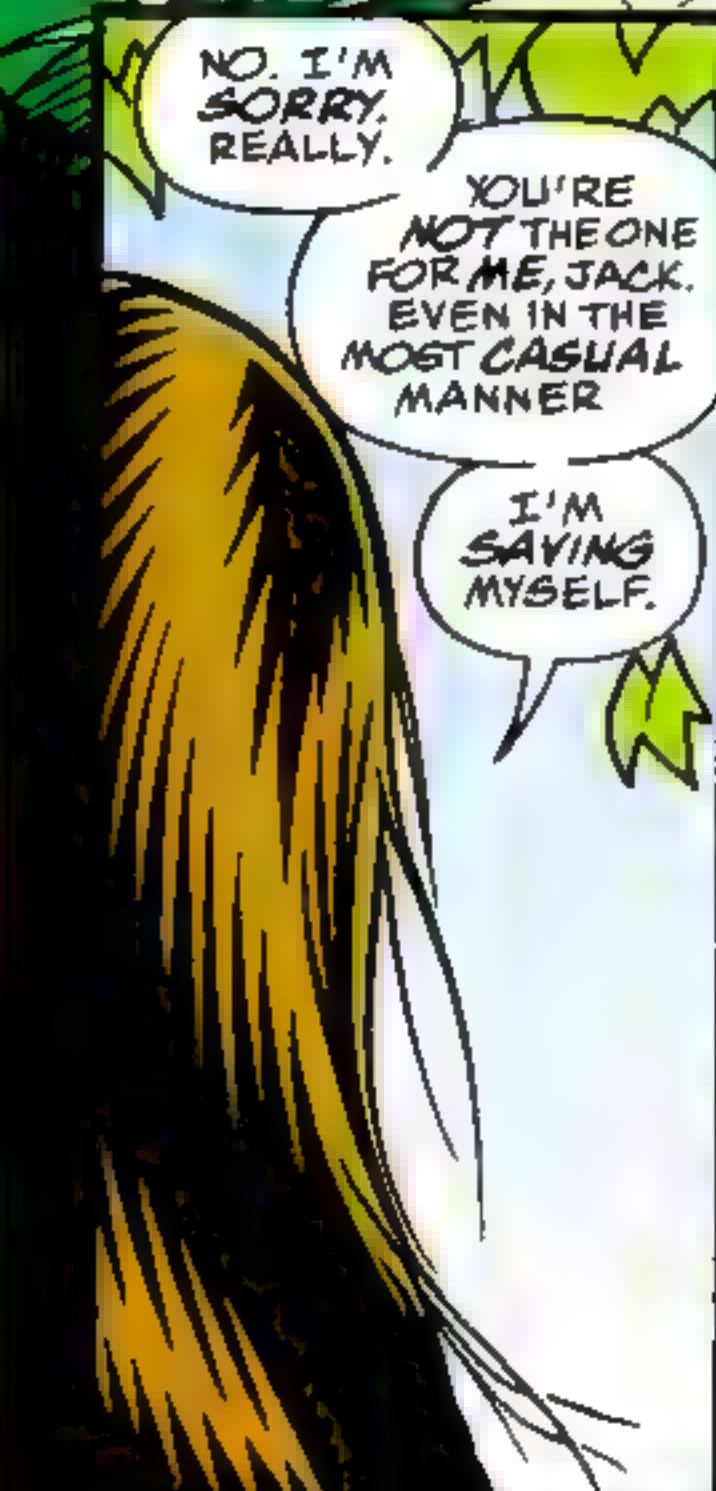
THAT YOU SHOULD TAKE THE QUIET TIME TO LISTEN TO YOURSELF.



CHARITY.

YES?

DO YOU WANT TO GO OUT WITH ME? A DRINK? A MOVIE? NOTHING TOO AVANT-GARDE.



NO. I'M SORRY. REALLY.

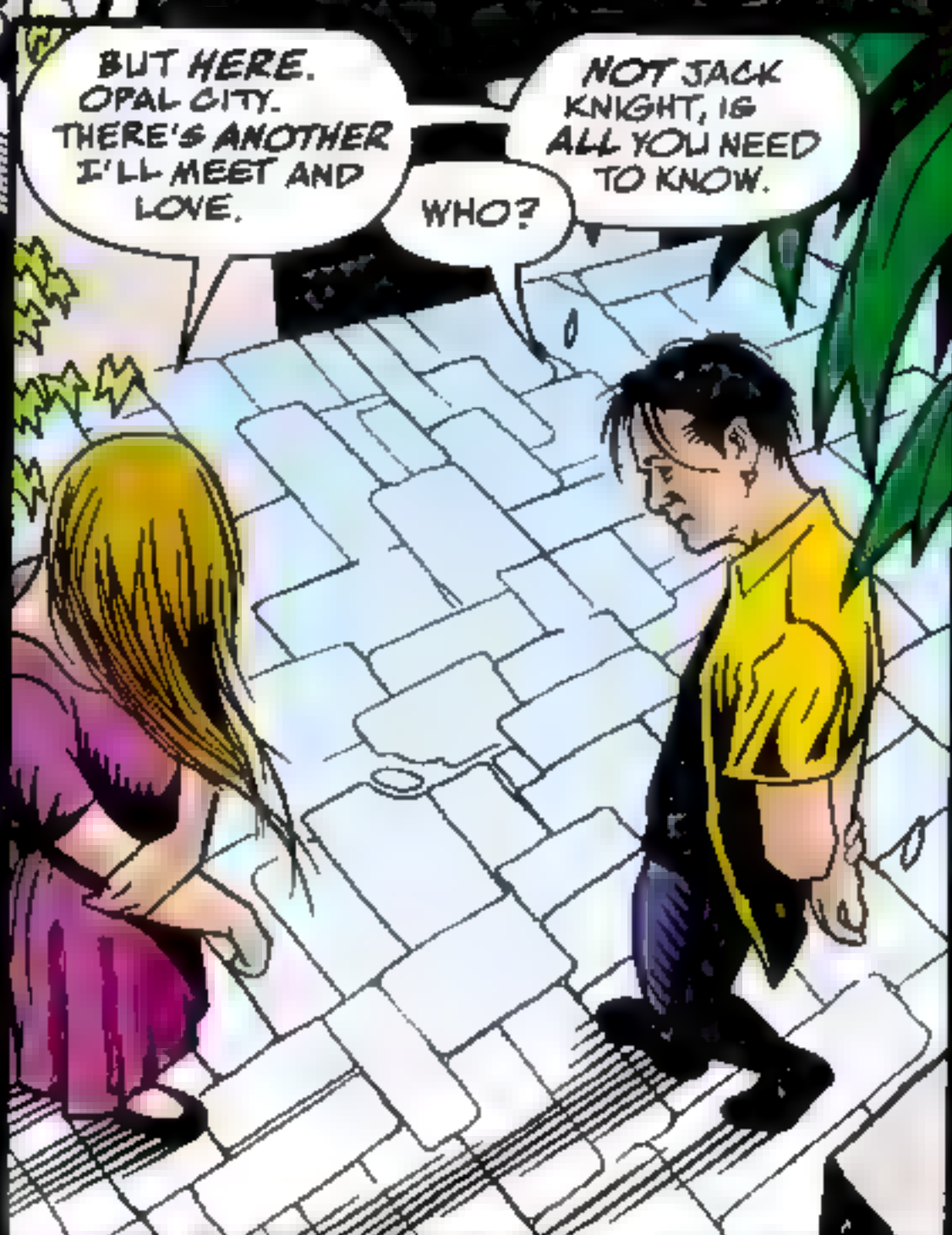
YOU'RE NOT THE ONE FOR ME, JACK. EVEN IN THE MOST CASUAL MANNER

I'M SAYING MYSELF.



UNTIL MARRIAGE?

NOTHING LIKE THAT, NO. BACK HOME THERE WAS MANY THE CAB OF A PICKUP TRUCK THAT KNEW MY FEET AGAINST ITS WINDSHIELD.



BUT HERE. OPAL CITY. THERE'S ANOTHER I'LL MEET AND LOVE.

WHO?

NOT JACK KNIGHT, IS ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW.

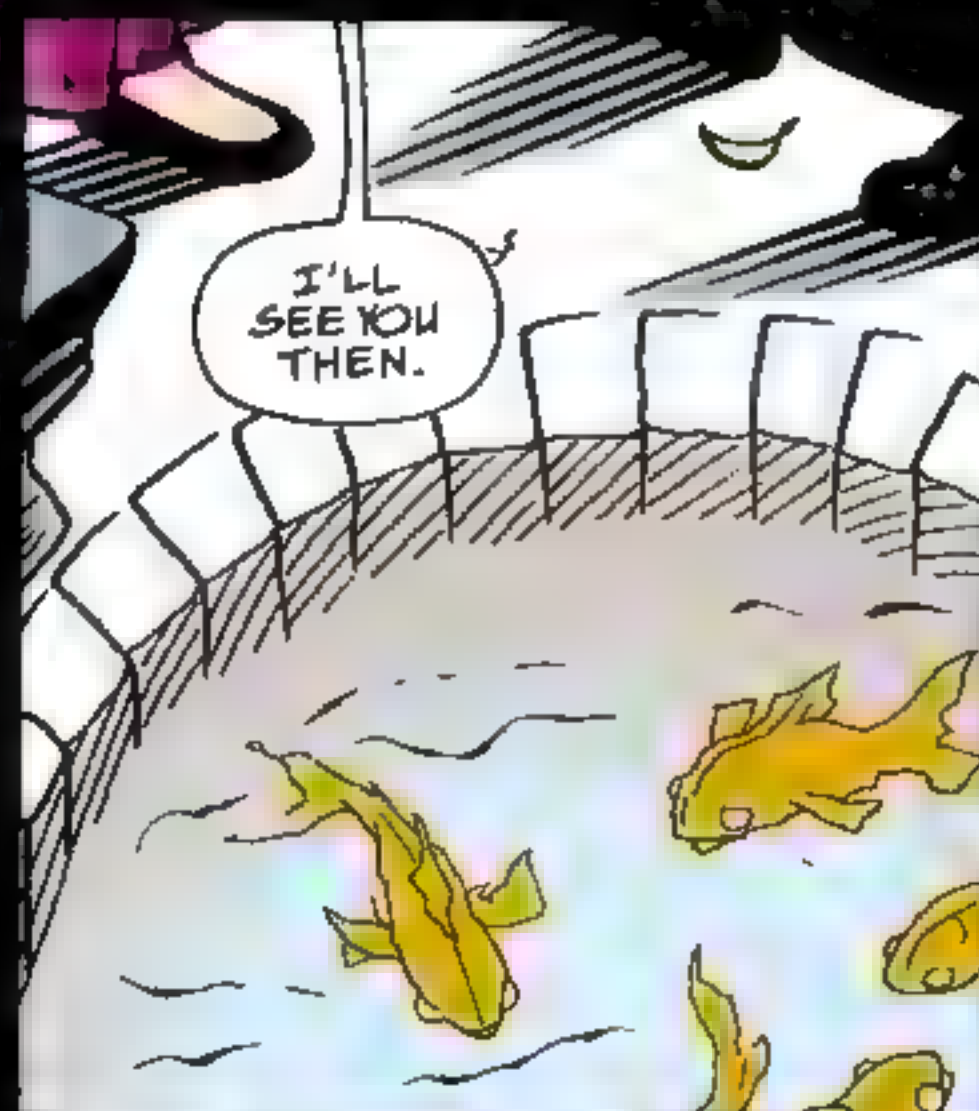


WELL, WHAT ABOUT DINNER AND A MOVIE JUST AS FRIENDS?

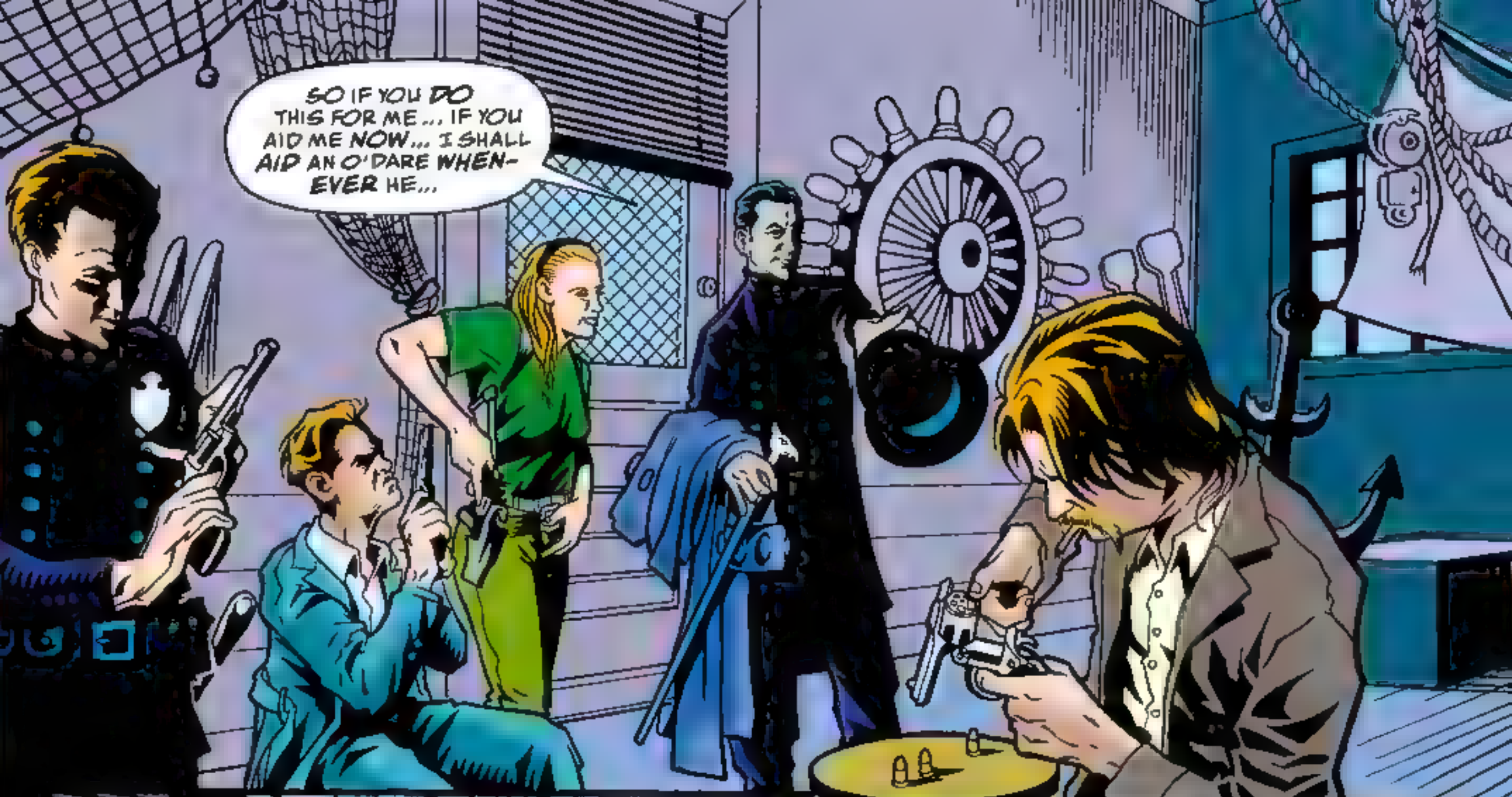
HOW ABOUT THAT? YOU CAN NEVER HAVE ENOUGH FRIENDS.

EIGHT O'CLOCK?

GET NINE, OKAY?



I'LL SEE YOU THEN.



SO IF YOU DO
THIS FOR ME... IF YOU
AID ME NOW... I SHALL
AID AN O'DARE WHEN-
EVER HE...



...OR SHE...

...HAS
NEED OF
ME

MY VISIT TO CENTRAL
CITY SUPPLIED ME WITH
A LOCATION HERE IN
OPAL WHERE DAMON
MERRITT MIGHT BE.

HIM, HIS
POSTER, THE
DEMON THAT
COMES WITH IT,
AND A SMALL
GROUP OF MEN
HE HAS AS A
SECONDARY
DEFENSE.



ERRR...

... WHY ISN'T
CLARENCE
HERE, BY THE
WAY?

DIDN'T
TELL HIM.

HE
DOESN'T
KNOW WHAT
WE'RE
DOING.



IF THIS ALL GOES SOUTH,
WE WANT ONE O'DARE TO BE
AROUND TO KEEP THE FAMILY
NAME GOING. HE'S THE OLDEST,
THE BRIGHTEST. HE HAS THE MOST
FUTURE AHEAD OF HIM. 'N' HE'S
MARRIED. I FEAR HIS WIFE IF WE
GOT CLARENCE KURT, FAR
MORE 'N ANYTHING A DEMON
CAN SPEW MY WAY.



WELL, ARE YOU
READY?

NO. BUT I
GUESS THAT'S
NOT REALLY
A FACTOR
HERE.

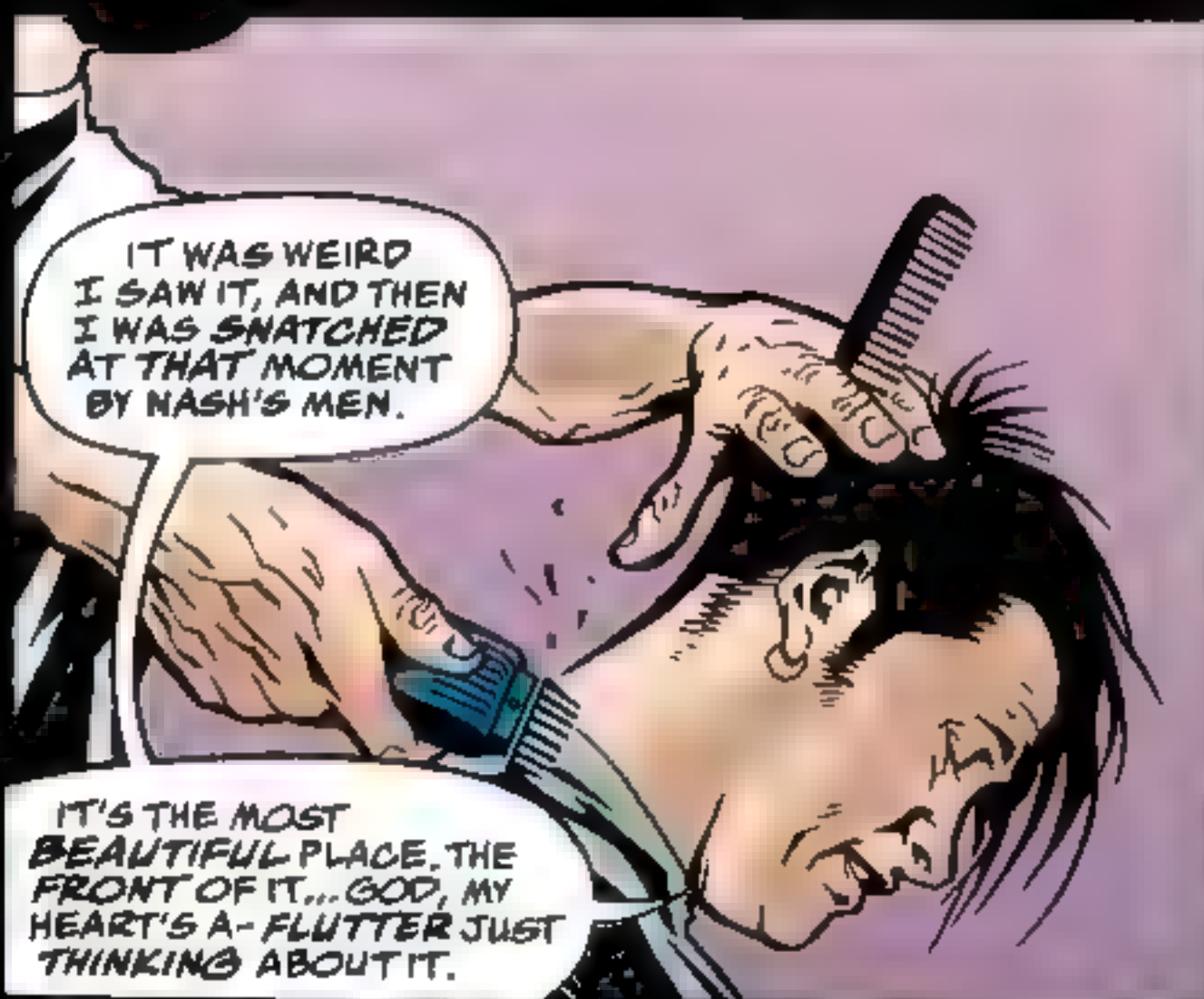
NOT
REALLY.



I FOUND MYSELF A NEW SHOP.

WHERE?

THREE BLOCKS OVER.



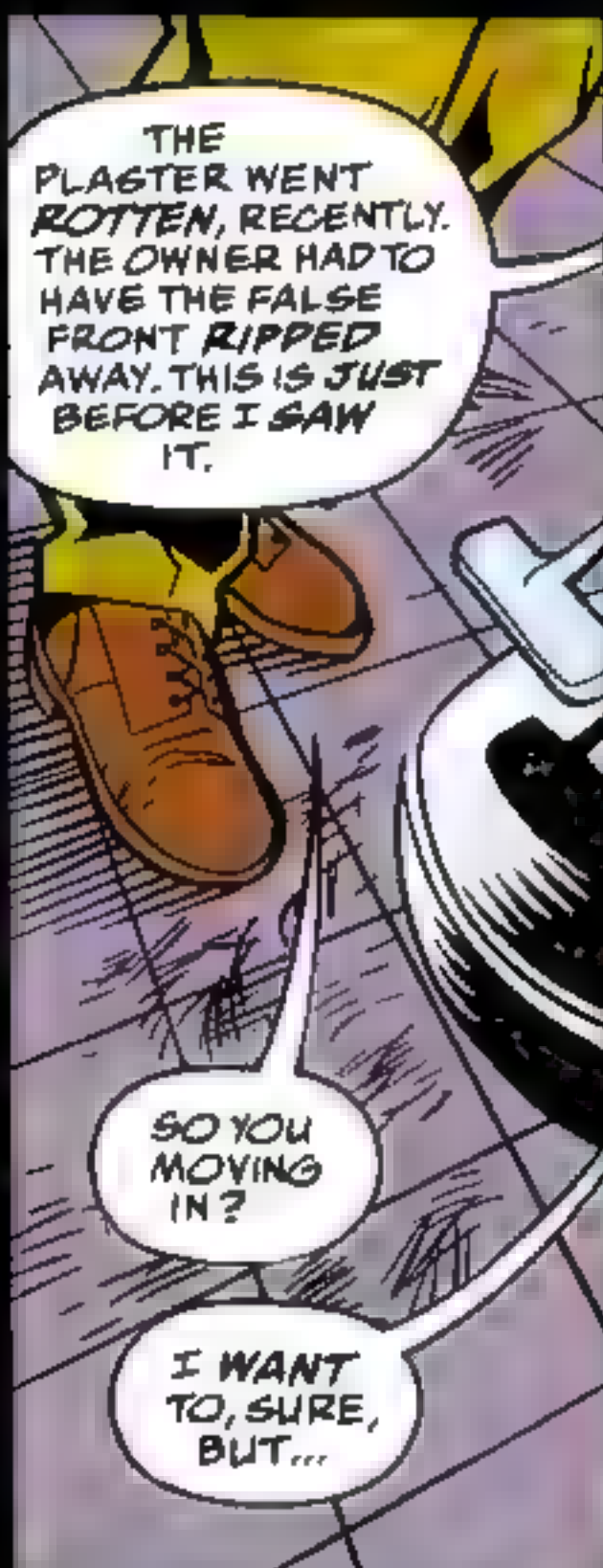
IT WAS WEIRD I SAW IT, AND THEN I WAS SNATCHED AT THAT MOMENT BY NASH'S MEN.

IT'S THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACE, THE FRONT OF IT... GOD, MY HEART'S A-FLUTTER JUST THINKING ABOUT IT.



HOW COME YOU'VE NEVER NOTICED IT BEFORE? YOU KNOW THE ALLEYS?

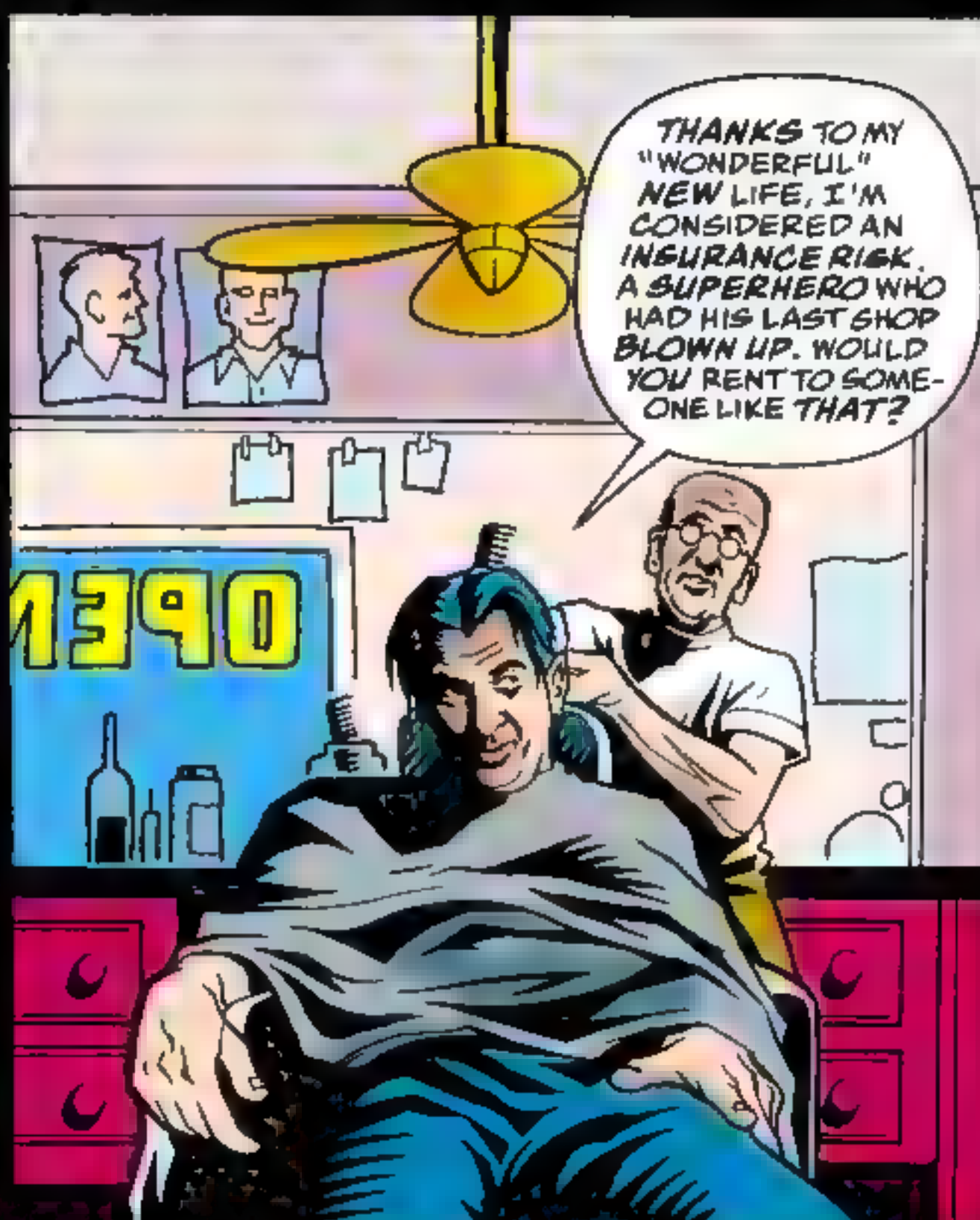
SOMEONE HAD PLASTERED OVER THE SHOPFRONT IN THE '70S. YOU KNOW, BACK WHEN THE WORLD FORGOT WHAT AESTHETIC MEANT.



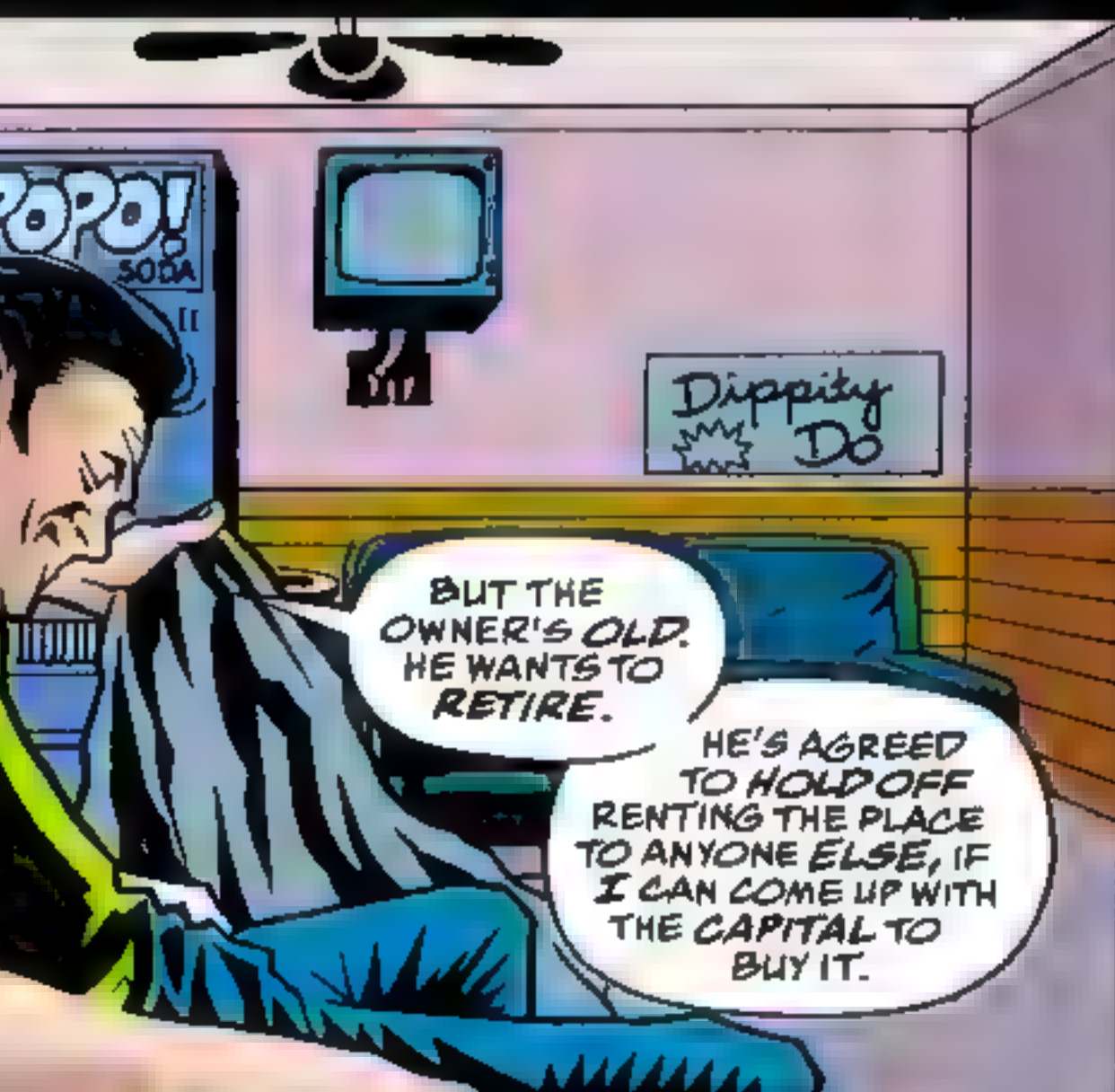
THE PLASTER WENT ROTTEN, RECENTLY. THE OWNER HAD TO HAVE THE FALSE FRONT RIPPED AWAY. THIS IS JUST BEFORE I SAW IT.

SO YOU MOVING IN?

I WANT TO, SURE, BUT...



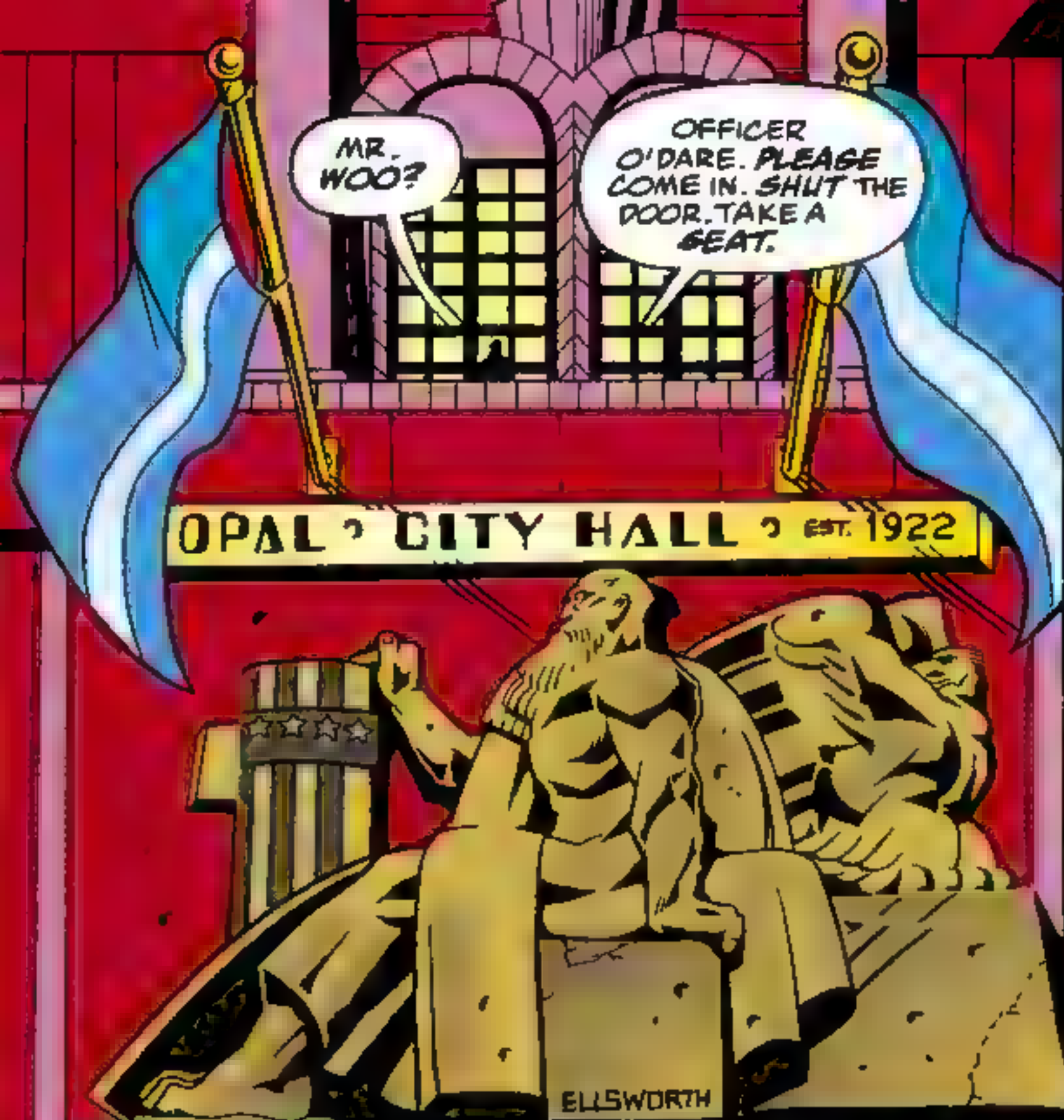
THANKS TO MY "WONDERFUL" NEW LIFE, I'M CONSIDERED AN INSURANCE RISK. A SUPERHERO WHO HAD HIS LAST SHOP BLOWN UP. WOULD YOU RENT TO SOMEONE LIKE THAT?



BUT THE OWNER'S OLD. HE WANTS TO RETIRE.

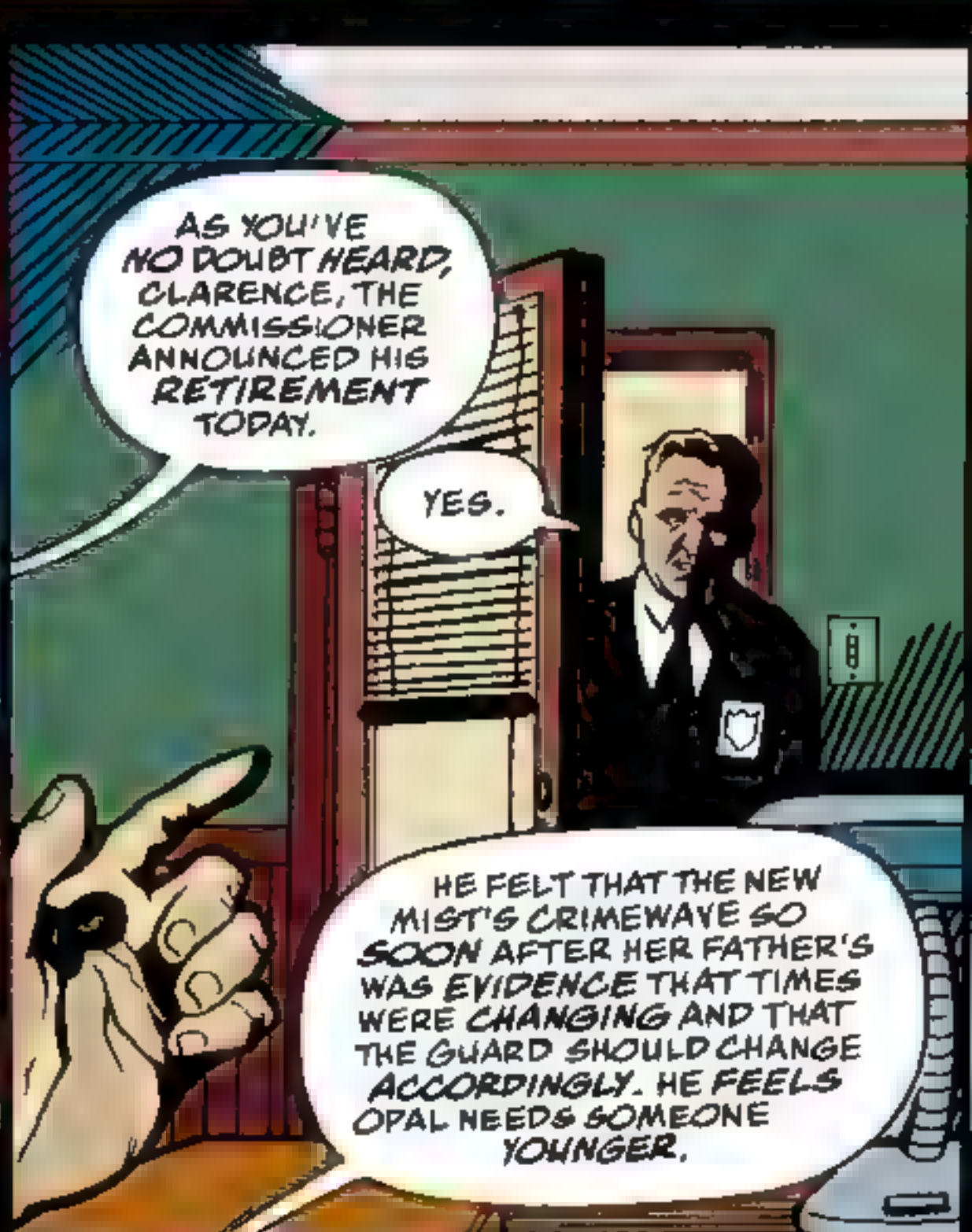
HE'S AGREED TO HOLD OFF RENTING THE PLACE TO ANYONE ELSE, IF I CAN COME UP WITH THE CAPITAL TO BUY IT.





MR. WOO?

OFFICER O'DARE. PLEASE COME IN. SHUT THE DOOR. TAKE A SEAT.



AS YOU'VE NO DOUBT HEARD, CLARENCE, THE COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCED HIS RETIREMENT TODAY.

YES.

HE FELT THAT THE NEW MIST'S CRIMEWAVE SO SOON AFTER HER FATHER'S WAS EVIDENCE THAT TIMES WERE CHANGING AND THAT THE GUARD SHOULD CHANGE ACCORDINGLY. HE FEELS OPAL NEEDS SOMEONE YOUNGER.



YES?

ME.

THEY'VE JUST INFORMED ME THAT I'M TO BE HIS REPLACEMENT.

OH.



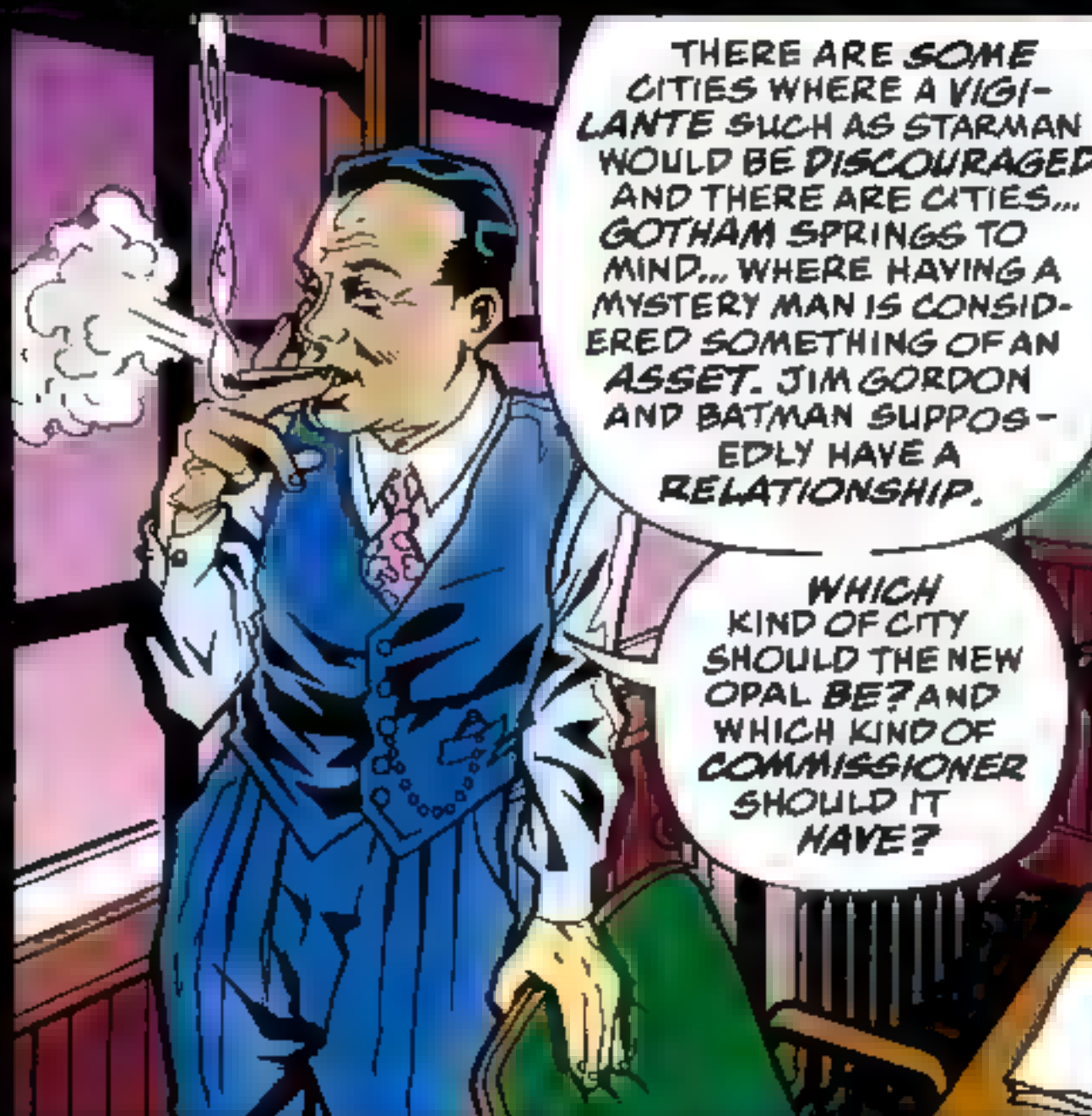
SO, I'VE CALLED YOU IN BECAUSE I'VE LONG BEEN AWARE OF YOUR WORK. YOU, THE HEAD OF THE LEGENDARY O'DARE CLAN AND ALL.

SNIK



YOUR FATHER AND RED BAILEY WERE THE TWO MEN CLOSEST TO THE OLD STAR-MAN. YOU'VE HAD SOME CONTACT WITH THE NEW ONE.

I WANT YOUR ADVICE.



THERE ARE SOME CITIES WHERE A VIGILANTE SUCH AS STARMAN WOULD BE DISCOURAGED. AND THERE ARE CITIES... GOTHAM SPRINGS TO MIND... WHERE HAVING A MYSTERY MAN IS CONSIDERED SOMETHING OF AN ASSET. JIM GORDON AND BATMAN SUPPOSEDLY HAVE A RELATIONSHIP.

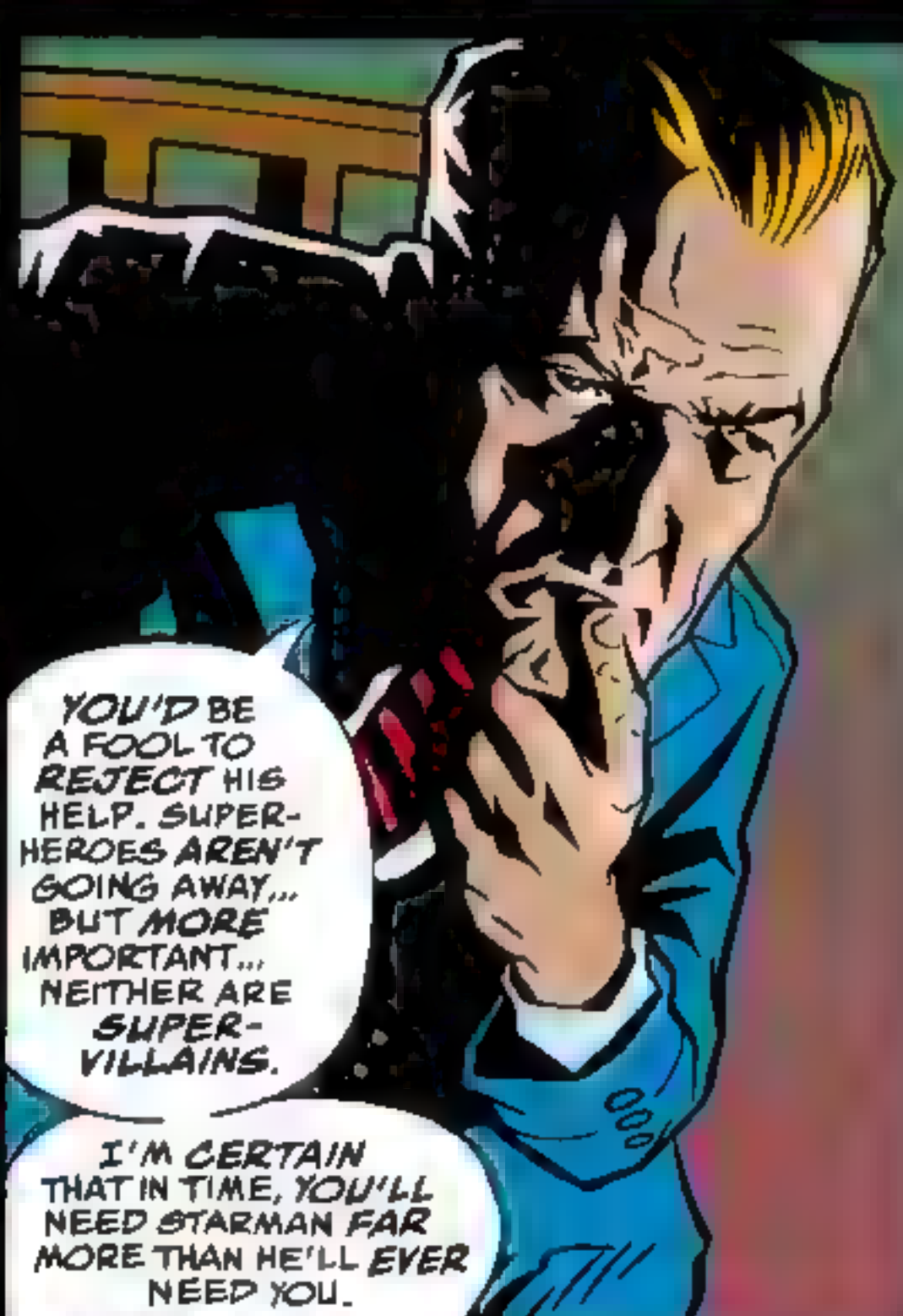
WHICH KIND OF CITY SHOULD THE NEW OPAL BE? AND WHICH KIND OF COMMISSIONER SHOULD IT HAVE?



UM...

...MR. WOO, BAILEY AND MY FATHER ARE FORWARD THINKERS. THEY SAW THE FUTURE... THAT SUPERHEROES WERE HERE TO STAY. PROGRESS. ONLY A FOOL DENIES PROGRESS.

JACK KNIGHT IS NEW AND FUMBLING. BUT HE'S BRAVE AND TRUE AND HE'S OPAL CITY'S.



YOU'D BE A FOOL TO REJECT HIS HELP. SUPERHEROES AREN'T GOING AWAY... BUT MORE IMPORTANT... NEITHER ARE SUPER-VILLAINS.

I'M CERTAIN THAT IN TIME, YOU'LL NEED STARMAN FAR MORE THAN HE'LL EVER NEED YOU.



VERY WELL. I WAS LEANING TOWARDS THAT MYSELF.

YOUR ADVICE COMES WITH A REWARD, CLARENCE ... MAY I CALL YOU CLARENCE, BY THE WAY? PLEASE, I INSIST YOU CALL ME SAM.



ANYWAY, THE CRAZY PART OF ALL WE'VE TALKED ABOUT. THE SUPER-POWERS. THE COLORFUL MADNESS. I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.

YOU DO.

I NEED AN AIDE. IT'S A PERMANENT POST. YOUR OWN OFFICE. A "SUPERHEROIC" SALARY HIKE.



SAY YES, AND THE JOB'S YOURS

IF I NEED STARMAN LIKE YOU SAY, THEN I'LL NEED YOU TO ACT AS LIAISON WITH HIM.



SO, CLARENCE? WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?

OPAL CITY HALL • EST. 1922

HOW DID IT
HAPPEN.

ALL THAT
HAPPENED.

FOR THE SHADOWY
MAN AND HIS
CLAN OF HELPERS.

AHH, BUT THAT
WOULD REQUIRE
A TALE IN
ITSELF.

WORRY NOT,
THAT TALE
WILL BE TOLD.

BUT
NOT
NOW.

NOW WE SEE
THE END OF IT.

ONE DAY YOU'LL
BE SHOWN IT ALL.
EVERYTHING
THAT OCCURRED.

HOW MERRITT
HAD BEEN
FOREWARNED.
HOW HIS GUARDS
WERE READY.

HOW THE
DEMON WAS
CALLED.

HOW THREE O'DARES
STAYED IN ONE
CHAMBER TO FIGHT
THE MEN.

HOW MERRITT
FLED...

HOW THEY FOUND
PAMON MERRITT'S
LAIR.

HOW THE SHADE AND ONE
O'DARE WENT WITHIN
MERRITT'S INNER SANCTUM
AND MET THE DEMON.

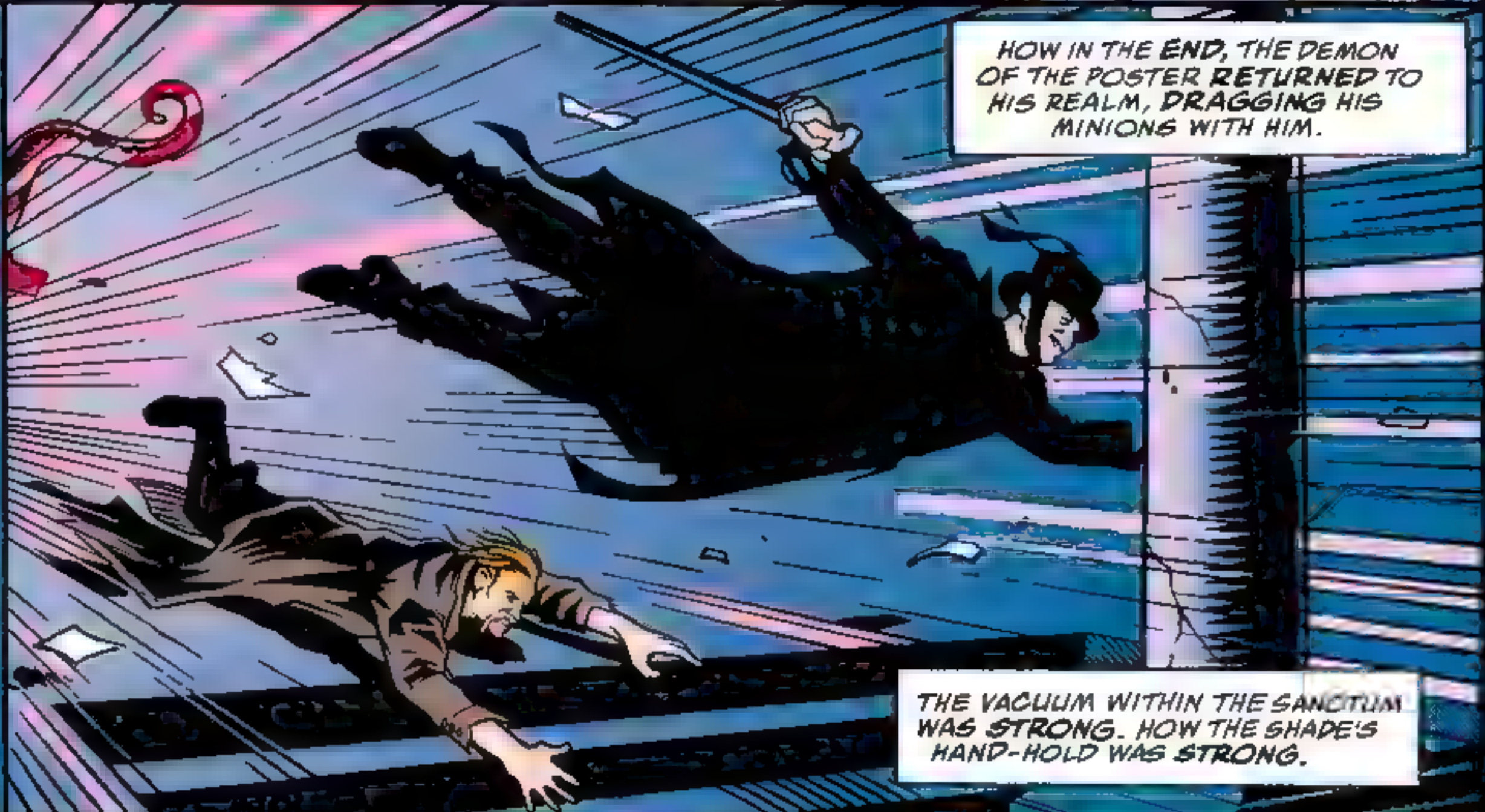
HOW THEY ALSO MET
WITH DIRE HELLISH
AGENTS OF THAT DEMON
WHO ALSO EMERGED
FROM WITHIN THE POSTER.

HOW THE
SHADE FOUGHT
THEIR MAGIC
WITH HIS.



HOW THAT
ONE O'DARE
FOUGHT THEIR
MAGIC...

...WITH HIS
SPECIAL
BRAND OF
SOMETHING.



HOW IN THE END, THE DEMON
OF THE POSTER RETURNED TO
HIS REALM, DRAGGING HIS
MINIONS WITH HIM.

THE VACUUM WITHIN THE SANCTUM
WAS STRONG. HOW THE SHADE'S
HAND-HOLD WAS STRONG.



AND HOW
THE O'DARE'S
HOLD WAS
NOT.

INDEED. INDEED. THAT
WILL ALL BE
TOLD. HOW IT
BEGAN.

BUT NOT NOW.


NOW WE SEE
THE END OF IT.






A FLICKER OF ENERGY SWIRLS ABOUT THE POSTER STILL. THE SHADE NOTES THIS...


AND IN THAT INSTANT SOMETHING OTHER THAN COMMON-SENSE TAKES HOLD OF HIM.



"SHADOW FORCE TO HELP ME THROUGH THE BREACH. INDEED, I SHALL NEED THAT."



"HMM, HOW QUEER," THE SHADOWY SHADOWY MAN MUSES, AS HE CHARGES AND LEAPS. "HOW UTTERLY ODD FOR ME TO BE DOING SUCH A THING."



"THIS IS HOW A HERO ACTS..."



2 Fools

"...NOT ONE
SUCH AS ME."

The End



Deadman Wade

"THIS IS WHAT
AWESOME
LOOKS LIKE".

DCP